



# News Release

---

**For immediate release:** September 15, 2011

(11-136)

Contacts: Michele Roberts, Immunization and Child Profile Office  
Kate Lynch, Communications Office

360-236-3720  
360-236-4072

## **Flu vaccine now available statewide**

*Best protection for everyone in your family*

**OLYMPIA** — Flu season is just around the corner and many health care providers in Washington already have flu vaccine. Protect yourself, your family, and your community, and get your flu shot now.

Flu is a serious disease that can be unpredictable. People can spread flu before they even know they have it, and up to a week after getting sick. “Flu vaccine is the best way to protect all of us,” says Secretary of Health Mary Selecky. “We should get a flu shot every year.”

The Department of Health provides flu vaccine to all kids under 19 at no cost. Health care providers may charge an office visit fee and a fee to give the vaccine, called an administration fee. People who cannot afford the administration fee can ask their regular health care provider to waive the cost. Adults should talk to their insurance carriers about coverage for flu vaccine.

Flu vaccines only protect you for the current season, so it’s important to get vaccinated every year. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommend that everyone six months of age and older get a yearly flu vaccine. Call your [local health agency](#) ([www.doh.wa.gov/LHJMap/LHJMap.htm](http://www.doh.wa.gov/LHJMap/LHJMap.htm)) or call the Family Health Hotline, 1-800-322-2588, to find an immunization clinic.

Certain people are at greater risk for flu and are urged to be vaccinated. Children five and under, adults 50 and over, pregnant women, and people with chronic conditions like asthma, heart disease, neurologic conditions, and diabetes, are at higher risk, as are health care workers and caregivers. Because babies under six months are too young to get a flu vaccine, it’s important to protect them by making sure parents, siblings, and caregivers are vaccinated. Young children up to age eight may need two doses of flu vaccine, about a month apart, for best protection.

Flu vaccine available statewide

September 15, 2011

Page 2

Using good health habits like washing hands, covering coughs, and staying home when sick will help prevent the spread of disease, including flu. The Department of Health's light-hearted WashYourHandsingTon campaign reminds people to practice these healthy habits. Download the [free WashYourHandsingTon ringtone](http://www.doh.wa.gov/ringtone/) (<http://www.doh.wa.gov/ringtone/>) for your mobile phone on the Department of Health [Flu News website](http://www.doh.wa.gov/FluNews/) ([www.doh.wa.gov/FluNews/](http://www.doh.wa.gov/FluNews/)). Get vaccinated. Stop the flu.

(Listen to [Secretary of Health Mary C. Selecky](#) talk about the importance of getting a flu shot using the MP3 audio clips on our [NewsRoom](http://www.doh.wa.gov/NewsRoom) page (<http://www.doh.wa.gov/NewsRoom>).

The [Department of Health website](http://www.doh.wa.gov) ([www.doh.wa.gov](http://www.doh.wa.gov)) is your source for *a healthy dose of information*. Also, [find us on Facebook](#) and [follow us on Twitter](#).

###